

Excerpt from the Student Visas webchat...

A Consular Officer from the U.S. Consulate General Chennai engaged with visitors for over one hour to talk about the student visa process, provide good tips and dispel some misconceptions.

Vadivelan K: Generally if the visas are rejected twice is there any chances of visa getting rejected for the third time too?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Again folks, this isn't a numbers game. There's no decrease or increase in chances. Each interview is treated as a new application.

Jayashree: Recently, I saw in news that video conferencing method will be used to conduct the visa interview. Where will it be held in Chennai? How will it be held?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Video conferencing is not an option at present. Face-to-face interviews are the most effective and secure way to conduct visa applications.

amviji: It is very easy to get a VISA from an agent than getting a VISA from Consulate. How far it is true?

USIEF Preethi Kumar: if I am to go to the US on a tourist visa, can i come back and immediately apply for a student visa?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Only US consulates and embassies can issue visas.

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Anyone who tells you otherwise is lying. Do not listen to them!

TN Region: Once my friend carried financial documents from an agent and he was caught at interview and he was asked to sign a letter and told to apply with genuine documents in future. Now will he need to mark YES to question have you ever mis-represented / carried fake documents. I was told that he cannot enter the U.S. at all but officer told him to apply with genuine documents?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): If you commit fraud willingly that affects visa issuance you will be banned from the US. You do need to list past refusals and misrepresentation, though.

Manis: Once my interview is over, will the officer say whether i am given a visa or not then & there?... or should i wait for some days before i receive a mail?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): The officer will tell you on the spot if you got the visa or did not.

daman: Good Afternoon Sir. My residence men mentioned in my passport comes under jurisdiction of New Delhi Consulate. But I have been working in Bangalore for past 9 months now. Is Offer Letter by my employer considered as proof for the state of residence. I am planning to apply for F1 visa at Chennai Consulate.

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): You may apply in any US Consulate in India, no matter where you live or work.

VARUN: GETTING ADMISSION IN AN AVERAGE TYPE OF UNIV AND WILL THAT AFFECT MY VISA

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): There is no "average" university in the US. Some schools might be better suited for you than others. If you can explain why you chose it, that'll be in your favor.

USIEFSurya: Does a past visitor visa to the US in the passport affect anything?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): No, prior visas do not affect F1 visa interviews.

RSP: What are the don't's in a visa interview?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Haha. I hope you can get the powerpoint from the website soon!

Manis: i have got admission and i have to be at Boston by this August.. when shall i start my visa application process...

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Don't lie, don't cheat, don't be rude, and try not to be nervous.

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): We suggest that you apply for a visa several months before you begin school, due to possible delays. You may not, however, enter more than 30 days before the program starts.

zerocool: Though my father's retired, my family has enough savings to sponsor my education. Is my family's current annual income a factor?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Again, finances are way less important than your explanation and potential. Bring your documents, just in case, and tell the consular officer why you're supported and by whom. High or low incomes are not as important a factor.

studentdelhi: Great chat! Thanks. What if I wish to study in a private college in the U.S. - that is not yet accredited, but hopes to be in future? They wouldn't issue I-20 right?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Unfortunately, studying at an unaccredited school is not permitted under US law. I'd suggest applying to multiple universities and only if they're accredited.

JANARDHAN: if there are many people attending visa interview on the same day for same university will that affect?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Nope. We might find it an interesting coincidence, but it doesn't affect issuances.

Manis: Once the officer says i've got a visa... how long will it take for my visa to be processed?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Visas usually come to your address within one week by courier. If you'd like, you may contact our VFS center the next day for pickup, if it's available.

TN Region: Can any prospective student apply for B2 visa to choose Universities in the U.S.? To look at the facilities available before making a decision.

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Students may enter the US on B2 in order to look for potential schools. They may not, however, study or work on that visa class. The officer will annotate your visa accordingly if you're going to look at schools.

Kris2kewl: Hello matt, quick qns , my father is working in Muscat ,Oman. I was planning to take an appointment from Muscat . I am currently put up in India. Is that a cause for concern?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Nope, you may apply for a visa in any country.

Samarth 2: What are the criteria for rejection of F1 visas?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): You must prove to the officer that you do not intend to stay permanently in the US OR work. You must also prove to him/her that you have the academic potential to complete your full degree studies. Finances are also a factor, though less important.

Siddharth: Why isn't there a standard format which the interviewer asks the students? I've heard, for some students the Visa interview process takes less than 30 seconds and for others, quite long..

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Each officer is a different person, has different reasoning and different questions. Some will take longer than others and will ask different questions.

Vadivelan K: me and my brother have got an admit in the same university.....Can we attend the visa interview together\

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): That's very nice for you! We'd prefer it, though, that you give separate interviews, though they can be on the same day.

prospective_student: How do I find If the college is accredited or unaccredited. Is there any listing?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Our friends at USIEF have great resources on taht. Please check out their website: <http://www.usief.org.in/index.aspx>

Pramod Kannan: my friend got his I20. but because he had scored less then 79 in his toefl he got his visa in which it was written that he had to take english as a subject. When he went for visa interview he got rejected. Does that statement in i20 is the reason for his rejection?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): No. Consular officers are aware that certain programs do not require English proficiency. If a student, however, plans to attend a shcool that does require it, but cannot speak a word, it will be difficult for him/her to explain why he/she plans to study in the US.

Vaibhav: Sir, I wish to sponser my Master's program by taking a loan. And i intend to take a loan from the US, so it will be a little difficult for me to show my financial creditability according ti my I-20 amount. Will that diminish my chances of getting a Visa ?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): The loan may or may not appear on the I-20. Please tell the officer that you've taken on out and have proof with you, just in case.

arnab: is there any promises to be made to the interviewer from my side to come back after my studies to india, will this increase the chance of getting my visa?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): You're evaluated based on your credentials, your explanation of school and program. Promises would not help.

Ashreen: What are the type of questions which are askd and what documents are required to be carried for such purpose?

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Ashreen--thanks for the question! You are only require dot carry the DS-160, I-20, and appointment letter.

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Keep in mind that the US is a less document-based culture than India. Officers prefer your own words to pieces of paper!

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Hey everyone, I wish you all so much luck in your future.

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Many of my friends in school were Indian and had a fantastic experience!

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): We hope you can join us in future discussions and that this one was helpful in clearing up some myths.

Usief RK: Thanks Matt for your valuable inputs

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): The transcript and powerpoint will appear on our website soon, so stay in touch.

Matt (U.S. Consulate General Chennai): Best wishes!

RSP: Thanks !

Benedict: Thanks for your time and input.